

What is claimed is:

1. A microwaveable package comprising:

- a) a support member having an upper surface and a lower surface;
- b) a bottom web having an upper surface and a lower surface, the lower surface of the bottom web being adhered to the upper surface of the support member;
- c) a food product disposed on the upper surface of the bottom web; and
- d) a top web disposed on the food product;

wherein the top web is draped over the food product such that the top web substantially conforms to the shape of the food product; and

wherein the top web is sealed at its lower surface to the upper surface of the bottom web to form a seal at a location outside the periphery of the food product, the seal having a peel strength, before microwaving, of at least 4 pounds per inch, and a peel strength, after microwaving, of less than 2.5 pounds per inch.

2. The microwaveable package of claim 1 wherein the support member comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polystyrene, polyamide, 1,4- polymethylpentene, and crystallized polyethylene terephthalate.

3. The microwaveable package of claim 1 wherein the bottom web comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising a blend of:
 - i) between 60% and 90%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
 - ii) between 10% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene; and
- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, polyacrylonitrile, and polyester.

4. The microwaveable package of claim 1 wherein the top web comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer; and

- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, and polyester.

5

5. The microwaveable package of claim 4 wherein the ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer comprises ethylene/ 1-octene copolymer.

6. A microwaveable package comprising:

10

- a) a support member having an upper surface and a lower surface;
b) a bottom web having an upper surface and a lower surface, the lower surface of the bottom web being adhered to the upper surface of the support member;
c) a food product disposed on the upper surface of the bottom web; and
d) a top web disposed on the food product;

15

wherein the top web is draped over the food product such that the top web substantially conforms to the shape of the food product; and

wherein the top web is sealed at its lower surface to the upper surface of the bottom web to form a seal at a location outside the periphery of the food product;

20

wherein the top web comprises a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha olefin copolymer, and the bottom web comprises a sealant layer comprising a blend of between 60% and 90%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and between 10% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene.

25

7. The microwaveable package of claim 6 wherein the support member comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polystyrene, polyamide, 1,4- polymethylpentene, and crystallized polyethylene terephthalate.

30

8. The microwaveable package of claim 6 wherein the bottom web comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising a blend of:

- i) between 60% and 90%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
 - ii) between 10% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene; and
- 5 b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, polyacrylonitrile, and polyester.
- 9. The microwaveable package of claim 6 wherein the top web comprises:
 - 10 a) a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer; and
 - 15 b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, and polyester.
- 10. The microwaveable package of claim 9 wherein the ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer comprises ethylene/ 1-octene copolymer.
- 11. A method of preparing a microwaveable package comprising:
 - 20 a) providing a support member having an upper surface and a lower surface;
 - 25 b) providing a bottom web having an upper surface and a lower surface;
 - 30 c) adhering the lower surface of the bottom web to the upper surface of the support member;
 - 25 d) placing a food product disposed on the upper surface of the bottom web; and
 - 30 e) draping a top web over the food product, in a vacuum skin packaging process, such that the top web substantially conforms to the shape of the food product; and such that the top web is sealed at its lower surface to the upper surface of the bottom web to form a seal at a location outside the periphery of the food product;

wherein the seal has a peel strength, before microwaving, of at least 4 pounds per inch, and a peel strength, after microwaving, of less than 2.5 pounds per inch.

- 5 12. The method of claim 11 wherein the support member comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polystyrene, polyamide, 1,4- polymethylpentene, and crystallized polyethylene terephthalate.
13. The method of claim 11 wherein the bottom web comprises:
- 10 a) a sealant layer comprising a blend of:
- i) between 60% and 90%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
- ii) between 10% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene; and
- 15 b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, and polyester.
14. The method of claim 11 wherein the top web comprises:
- 20 a) a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer; and
- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, polyacrylonitrile, and polyester.
- 25 15. The method of claim 14 wherein the ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer comprises ethylene/ 1-octene copolymer.
16. A method of preparing a microwaveable package comprising:
- 30 a) providing a support member having an upper surface and a lower surface;
- b) providing a bottom web having an upper surface and a lower surface;

- c) adhering the lower surface of the bottom web to the upper surface of the support member;
- d) placing a food product disposed on the upper surface of the bottom web; and
- e) draping a top web over the food product, in a vacuum skin packaging process, such that the top web substantially conforms to the shape of the food product; and such that the top web is sealed at its lower surface to the upper surface of the bottom web to form a seal at a location outside the periphery of the food product;

wherein the seal has a peel strength, before microwaving, of at least 4 pounds per inch, and a peel strength, after microwaving, of less than 2.5 pounds per inch.

17. The method of claim 16 wherein the support member comprises a material selected from the group consisting of polypropylene, polystyrene, polyamide, 1,4- polymethylpentene, and crystallized polyethylene terephthalate.

18. The method of claim 16 wherein the bottom web comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising a blend of:
 - i) between 60% and 90%, by weight of the sealant layer, of ethylene/vinyl acetate copolymer, and
 - ii) between 10% and 40%, by weight of the sealant layer, of polypropylene; and
- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, and polyester.

19. The method of claim 16 wherein the top web comprises:

- a) a sealant layer comprising an ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer; and

- b) an oxygen barrier layer comprising a polymer selected from the group consisting of ethylene/vinyl alcohol copolymer, vinylidene chloride copolymer, polyamide, polyacrylonitrile, and polyester.

5 20. The method of claim 19 wherein the ethylene/alpha-olefin copolymer comprises ethylene/ 1-octene copolymer.

2004-04-01 10:00:00